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Fall 2002

CITY OF BELMONT

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Art & Wine Festival Set for Sept. 21-22

he 19th annual Belmont Twin Pines Art & Wine Festival is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 21-22, at the historic Twin Pines Park, 1225 Ralston Ave., between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

The festival will offer opportunities to enjoy the arts. The California Artists will have art exhibitors located throughout the park. The Belmont Historical Society will also be open for all to visit.

The festival will also feature continuous live music, a variety of community-group sponsored food booths, and an outstanding collection of wine from local wineries. Visitors will have an opportunity to purchase the official Twin Pines Art & Wine Festival collector's wine glasses.

The festival serves as a fundraiser for various Parks and Recreation Department projects, as well as for participating community non-profit organiza-



tions. For more information, call the Parks and Recreation Department at (650) 595-7441.

Citizen Opinion Survey Results: 91% Rate Belmont as 'Above Average' Place to Life

The vast majority of residents appear to be \bot pleased with the quality of life in the City of Belmont – overall 91% rate the City as an above average place to live and 69% give an "above average" to the overall quality of services provided by the City, according to results of the 2002 Citizen Opinion Survey.

Among the key findings:

- 96% of residents feel "very safe" or "fairly safe" in Belmont
- 85% of residents feel it is "very easy" or "fairly easy" to obtain information about City
- 72% of residents rate City staff "above average" for overall helpfulness.
- 49% of residents said traffic is a serious problem in their neighborhood.
- Satisfaction levels with key services were: 89% favorable for police protection.
- 91% favorable for fire protection.
- 63% favorable for park, athletic field and open space maintenance.
- 52% favorable for maintenance of streets, roads, sidewalks and street trees.

"The survey results help us understand what issues are most important to the community and how we are doing," said City Manager Jere Kersnar. "Staff will be analyzing the data and using it to improve service delivery."

Approximately 3,500 surveys were distributed in April to randomly selected households. Residents could respond by calling a toll-free phone number, by using the Internet, or by mailing the responses in a postage-paid envelope. 702 residents responded, including 367 who used the Internet. The results are at the 95% confidence level, +/- 4%.

This was the first time Belmont has done a citywide satisfaction survey since 1995. The survey

was designed and conducted by the Gelfond Group, a professional research firm that has done similar surveys for public and private sector clients.

"As is done in the private sector, staff believes it is important for government agencies to know what their customers want, expect and think of the service provided," Kersnar said. "The theory behind a citizen

opinion survey is that you do not truly know how you are doing, how you can improve, or what is most important, without asking the users of

Complete survey results can be found at www.belmont.gov under "press releases."

Belmont's Top 12 Priorities Listed

Tove over David Letterman. Meet Belmont's Top 12 – that is, the top 12 priorities for 2002-2003, as designated by the City Council.

The Council directed staff to make these projects their highest priority over the two-year period. Ranked in no particular order, the list includes:

- Build a new Fire Station 14
- Replace the Police Facility
- Enhance the 101/Ralston interchange
- Build a bike/pedestrian bridge over 101
- Implement performance budgeting
- Begin spending RDA bond funds
- Re-engineer the development review process
- Reach consensus on the Harbor Industrial Area
- Undertake a visioning process and update the General Plan
- Build a new library
- Develop a low-moderate income housing strategy
- Develop traffic policies

The "Priority Calendar" adopted by Council in April shows which meetings certain reports are expected to be taken up by the City Council. All items on the Priority Calendar are expected to be completed according to the timelines established, but the high priority issues listed above are those where Council and staff devote focused attention. The Council wanted to highlight certain "big ticket" priorities because there are certain major issues that transcend the six-month timeframe of the biannual priority-setting process adopted; these are the priorities for the Council during its entire two year tenure (even though some may take longer than 2 years to complete, significant progress is expected in that timeframe).

The City Council is scheduled to rank new projects at the September 24 meeting, but the citywide priorities are not expected to change. The current Priority Calendar can be found on the City Clerk page of the City's website (www.belmont.gov).

understand what issues are most important to the your services." community and how we are doing...'

'The survey results help us

Belmont Receives Electric Vehicle for School Patrol

The Belmont Police Department has been selected to receive one of the first new-to-market TH!NK electric vehicles from Hayward Ford.

The new zero-emissions, low-speed electric vehicle will be used by the Police Department's school resource officer/drug abuse resistance education officers who are involved with schools in Belmont. The SRO is responsible for providing support to Carlmont and Notre Dame High Schools and provides support to the security department at Notre Dame de Namur University.

"The SRO needs a vehicle that is able to move around the various campuses on small paths, playing fields and parking lots," says Police Commander Don Mattei.

The vehicle is valued at nearly \$8,000. Belmont will pay only the maintenance for the vehicle.

Approximately 50 U.S. Ford dealers in California and the Sun Belt will be the first to offer the new 2002 TH!NK beginning this fall.



Restoration & Relocation of Emmett House in Works

The City Council has directed staff to develop a plan to move the historic Emmett House to city-owned property at 1000 O'Neill Avenue just south of Twin Pines Park and restore it to its original appearance. The building is currently located at 843 Ralston Avenue amidst businesses and the Village Center.

The Emmett House is considered one of the few remaining examples of 19th century residential architecture in Belmont. Walter Emmett built the original one-story, wood-frame family cottage in 1885, adding the second story in 1899. Between

1880 and 1910, he was among Belmont's most important merchants.

The Council chose relocating the Emmett House from among other alternatives, including:



Progress Report on Police Facility/City Hall, Fire Station No. 14, Library

hat's the status of the many capital projects underway in Belmont?

Police Facility/City Hall Update

An architect is expected to be selected in September to revise and update plans to relocate the police department into the existing city hall and to prepare plans for remodeling and seismic retrofit of city hall.

The anticipated project includes:

- A complete seismic retrofit of the entire 43,000 sq.ft. city hall at 1070 Sixth Avenue.
- Remodel portions of the first and second floors.
- A new entry lobby and permit center.

The architect will update a previously completed set of contract documents for a police facility and seismic retrofit project. Bids were opened in the summer of 2001 but rejected because the low bid was \$7.8 million, well over the estimated \$5.2 million.

Unlike previous plans, the building is expected to

be completely vacated during construction.

"A significant factor in deciding to salvage the original design is to minimize the time required to move the police into a new facility," said Police Chief Greg Janke.

The police have been housed in 'temporary quarters' that are inadequate since 1979. After the earlier bids came in so high, the council considered alternatives such as a free-standing police building, but a completely new approach to the project would not only require more design time, but also an additional planning commission review.

If all proceeds well, a bid for construction could be awarded in summer 2003. Construction would take 12 to 18 months.

Fire Station 14 Update

Reconstruction of Fire Station 14 on Granada Street at Ralston Avenue is scheduled to begin soon and be completed in a year, reports South County Fire Authority Chief Herb Jewell. Award of a construction contract was expected to be approved in September.

The new station features a single-story apparatus bay on the ground floor, which will house one front-line ambulance, an on-reserve aerial ladder truck and one front-line pumper vehicle. The ground floor also will include an office area, training and fitness rooms, restrooms and storage area. The second floor will include a kitchen, common area, restrooms, and dormitory.

An 11-space parking lot will face Masonic Way, along with a 20-foot wide driveway for trucks to access the station. The fire-rescue apparatus leave from this fire station "lights and sirens" through the front entrance onto Ralston Avenue. They return to this fire station through the rear entrance from Masonic. Library Update

Belmont's Library grant application was submitted to the State in June and has passed the first screening. The grant, for \$10 million in Prop. 14 bond funds, was over 1,000 pages and weighted 18 pounds. Sixty-six applications were submitted statewide for first round funding, greatly exceeding the total allocation of \$350 million for three rounds. Notification on the grant should be received by the end of the year.

Election for City Clerk Scheduled for Nov. 5

The City of Belmont will hold a special election to fill the unexpired term of the City Clerk on Tuesday, Nov. 5, necessitated by the resignation of Kathy Kern.

The candidates are:

- George A. Burgess.
- Terri Cook.
- Eleanore Hahn.Christina Wagenseller.
- The term will expire in November 2003, with a regular election occuring then for a full four-year

October 21, 2002 is the last day to register to vote for the Nov. 5 election. Absentee voter ballots may be requested between Oct. 7-29.

- Leave the house where it is, under the ownership of the city, which would continue to rent out the space of the building. (Notre Dame de Namur University had been leasing the bottom floor but gave up the lease at the end of 2001.)
- Sell the property "as is" with no restrictions, leaving it open to the possibility to drastic renovation or demolition.
- Sell the property with restrictions, directing the buyer concerning its restoration and maintenance.
- Demolish the building, using the property for other purposes.

The relocation and restoration plan is being prepared by Garavaglia Architects – a leading Bay Area historical architecture firm location in San Francisco. The study is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The study will consider how to use the Emmett house to create affordable housing, as the City's Redevelopment Agency's Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund owns the structure and land. In addition, the Council has also asked city staff to look into whether a local group might buy the relocated house, and do the restoration themselves.

Davis Named Public Works Director



Ray Davis joined Belmont as public works director in May.

"Ray comes to us with a wealth of experience in traffic and transportation engineering," said City Manager Jere Kersnar, who made the appointment. "He has strong management skills and experience working with neighborhood groups and others to build consensus, in negotiating with applicants in regard to development proposals, and working with other departments in processing development applications - all of which will be called upon in Belmont."

Davis has 25 years of both public and private sector experience. In addition to more than five years with San Leandro as transporation administrator, he spent a combined nine years with the cities of Santa Monica and Torrance. He also worked more than 10 years in the private sector, including service with Brian Kangas Foulk Engineering (BKF) in Redwood City.

"I am pleased to be part of the Belmont team and adding my experience to that of the staff in place," he said. "I want to promote customer service, responsiveness, and professionalism."

Davis received his Bachelor of Science in Transportation Engineering from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and his Master of Public Administration from Cal State Dominguez Hills. He was recently elected to the International Board of Directors of the Institute of Transportation Engineers, the leading professional transportation engineering association.

When making the appointment, Kersnar also thanked Duncan Jones, who served as acting director after the departure of John Curtis in October 2001.

Get Agendas, Minutes Sent to Your E-mail

You can have agendas and minutes from the City Council and commissions, as well as press releases, sent automatically to your email. Logon to www.belmont.gov to sign-up.

Tips for Reducing Open Space Fire Threats

Belmont's city limits contain considerable open space with vegetation that annually poses a fire threat to neighboring residences. Here are some suggestions from the South County Fire Protection Authority:

- **Problem** <u>Debris</u>: Tinder dry needles and leaves on your roof and in your rain gutters can easily catch fire and endanger your home. Also, dead limbs overhanging your home may ignite and spread a fire. **Solution**: Sweep gutters and roof on a regular basis, especially during the dry, hot weather of fire season, and remove all dead limbs that overhang the roof.
- Problem Tree Limb proximity to chimneys: Tree limbs too close to your chimney can easily ignite and endanger your home. **Solution**: Trim all limbs that are within 10 feet of your chimney.
- **Problem** <u>Overgrown</u>, <u>dead vegetation</u>: Overgrown, dead or dying landscape can ignite and endanger your home. **Solution**: Maintain your landscape by trimming and removing any dead and/or dying vegetation as well as dead and/or dying or low tree limbs to prevent the laddering of fuels effect. When re-landscaping, choose fire-resistive, drought-tolerant plants.
- Problem Dense, flammable vegetation:
 Combustible vegetation too close to your home will hinder firefighters' efforts to protect your home in the event an open space fire occurs.

 Solution: Provide a clearance between your home and combustible vegetation of between 30 and 100 feet, depending on the slope of your property and the type of vegetation growing upon it.

Some examples of fire resistive plants:
African daisy, Capeweed, carpet bugle, ivy
geranium, periwinkle myrtle, thyme, woolly
yarrow, salt brush, Santolina, sagebrush, Lippa,
dwarf coyote brush, Manzanita, Myoporum,
Sageleaf rockrose, trailing gazanias, wild strawberry, ice plant, Algerian ivy, dwarf rosemary, wild
lilac, and trailing lantana.

Belmont Budget: A Special Report

'This Fiscal Year is shaping up to be one of the most challenging the City has faced in more than a decade'

Council Adopts '02-03 Budget; Uncertainties Remain

Did You Know?

Belmont receives about \$77 in prop-

erty tax revenue per resident.

The City Council has adopted its budget for the **▲** fiscal year 2002-2003, which began July 1. Total

revenues are estimated at \$39.3 million, including General Fund revenues of \$14 million. Total expenditures are estimated at \$58 million, including General Fund expenditures of \$13.8 million.

The General Fund supports basic City services, including police, public works, parks and recreation, and general government operations. About half of the General Fund expenditures are for police services. The bulk of the expenditures in the budget are for specific capital projects which have had revenues set aside for them.

The budget is essentially "status quo" – it contains no new positions and existing services and service levels have been maintained. However, the long-term financial situation is not positive.

"This fiscal year is shaping up to be one of the most challenging the City has faced in more than a decade," City Manager Jere Kersnar told the Council in his "budget brief." (For full report, log on to www.belmont.gov and go to the Finance Department page). "Briefly, these challenges come from the

Did You Know?

The City of Belmont gets only 7 cents of each property tax dollar. long range financial forecast which indicates the need for a

permanent corrective action in the range of \$750,000, the threat of continued economic weak-

Debut of Performance **Budgeting**

The FY 2002-2003 budget features implementation of performance budgeting for the first time. Performance budgeting enables the City Council and staff to focus on outcomes and results rather than just dollars and inputs.

Performance budgeting entails the restructuring of the City's operations into budgetary service areas, each of which is structured to answer three fundamental questions about the service: why, how and how well.

Each service area has an overall mission and a series of specific performance measures. The mission is intended to be a high-level outcome or statement of the desired results. The measures are intended to establish accountability for specific service levels.

"Traditionally, municipal governments allocate resources based on inputs and lineitems," explained Finance Director Thomas Fil. "The focus now is on defining the level and quality of services to be provided for a given sum of funding. With performance budgets, detailed line-items are no longer provided. Instead, a bottom line budget and staffing level is shown along with the mission and measures."

"While other cities are doing some work in this area, I believe we have the most extensive and integrated performance budgeting system in San Mateo County," said Assistant City Manager

Four service areas are now on the new format: finance, police, parks and open space, and facility services. The remainder of the City's operating programs will be converted to performance budgeting for the next fiscal year.

ness and a potential state takeaway."

Kersnar added, "While the City is in sound

financial condition today, efforts must be taken now to maintain that position in the future. These actions will be challenging to take and implement, but Belmont is not alone. Most cities are confronted by the same, or

worse, conditions."

In light of the economic uncertainty and potential impacts of state takeaways, Kersnar said that the mid-year budget review in March should include:

■ Targeted studies of where costs may be able to

be reduced without diminishing present levels of service.

Did You Know?

Belmont gets only 1-cent of the sales tax on transactions in Belmont.

- A review of potential new revenues.
- The development of alternative service levels for each operation affecting the General Fund bottom line. This would involve each department developing several options describing the new level of service and impact of reductions on the community, and the cost savings that would result. The Council could then select service level reductions it wished to pursue.

Did You Know?

Sales tax revenue in Belmont decreased 6.6% from FY 00-01 to FY 01-02.

Local Financing Increasingly Linked to State

"Local finances have become increasingly complicated, and increasingly linked to the state ever since Prop. 13," said Finance Director Thomas Fil. The City's budget is really made up of several separate budgets or "funds."

As noted above, the General Fund is the tax supported "budget" that funds general City services. Fire, on the other hand, is supported through the Belmont Fire Protection District, which collects property taxes to pay the South County Fire Authority.

The City also has a Redevelopment Agency, made up of approximately the eastern third of the city. Money in this fund can only be used for redevelopment projects. There are also a number of "special funds" where the revenues and expenditures are linked to specific issues, such as sewer, recreation or development services.

Did You Know?

Belmont has lost more than \$500,000 annually due to state takeaways of local revenues.

Belmont Newletter

(Printed on Recycled Paper)

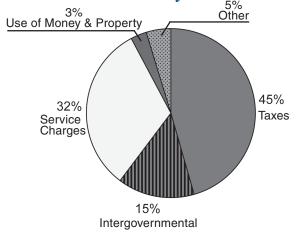
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Dan Rich, Assistant City Manager

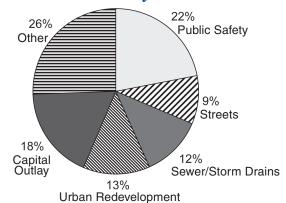
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Where Does the Money Come From?



Where Does the Money Go?



Capital Improvement **Project Highlights**

The capital improvement budget for FY ▲ 2002-2003 include \$20.1 million for projects. Highlights include the following: · \$2.9 million for a variety of street improvements. Ralston Avenue and Alameda de Las Pulgas will be upgraded and several neighborhood streets will be overlayed.

- · \$5.4 million for the Police Facility project.
- · \$4.9 million for Redevelopment Agency projects. Work will include utility undergrounding, façade improvements, and street improvements.
- · \$1.2 million for affordable housing projects.

Did You Know?

The City spends approximately \$550 in General Fund expenditures per

3 Departments Win Awards; **Residents Honored for Recycling**

Three city departments have won prestigious ■ awards as have city residents:

- The California Peace Officers Association recognized the Police Department's "Belmont Safe Schools" Program as among the best in the state.
- The San Juan Hills Area Lot Merger Program has received the 2002 "Planning Implementation" award by the Northern Section of the California Chapter of the American Planning Association.
- The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has awarded the Certificate of Achievement to the Finance Department for Excellence in Financial Reporting.
- The California Integrated Waste Management Board honored Belmont for reaching the statemandated goal of 50 percent diversion from the wastestream. Belmont has reduced waste by 63%.

Belmont News Briefs

City, School District Sign Agreement for Maintaining Facilities and Programs

The Belmont City Council and Belmont/Redwood Shores School Board approved a new cooperative master agreement in June. The agreement continues the cooperative efforts of the two agencies in providing and maintaining facilities and programs for the benefit of the citizens of the City and School District.

Highlights of the agreement include:

- The City's Parks and Recreation Department will continue to maintain and schedule four school athletic fields,
- The District will assume responsibility for the operation of the Ralston Middle School After School Sports Program, with the City making an annual \$8,500 contribution for a portion of the operating costs,
- The City and District will continue to jointly operate the annual Summer School and Summer

Enrichment Program for four weeks each summer,

- The District will make the new Ralston Middle School gymnasium available to the City's Parks and Recreation Department for community recreation programs. The gym will be available to the City for a minimum of 500 hours each year of the agreement.
- The City will make an annual contribution of \$10,000 to the District for general operating costs of the gym.

In addition to the operation of the programs and facilities the agreement commits the City and School District to cooperate in working towards a long-range solution for funding and completing improvements to the City and District athletic fields, as well as improving on-going maintenance of the fields.

The agreement is for a term of three years.

Citizens Give New Permit Center at City Hall High Marks

Belmont's new "one-stop" permit center designed to simplify the process of getting permits is getting good reviews from users.

"The one stop center is great because everyone knows what everyone else is doing," says long-time resident Marc Soper, who used the service for getting permits for a major remodeling of his home on Monte Cresta Drive.

"I've gotten permits before and it's so much easier now," Soper adds. "I have heard horror stories about getting permits in other cities and communities. Belmont's one-stop center has to be one of the most efficient and customer-friendly."

He and his wife met in eighth grade at Ralston School in Belmont. They have lived in the Monte Cresta Drive home for many years, where they raised four daughters and a son.

When a new tenant needed various permits for interior construction at a vacant store at the Belmont Village Center at El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue, Barney McCarthy of The Innisfree Companies was pleasantly surprised to discover the Permit Center at City Hall.

He accompanied Michael Parks and Patricia Kim, owners of the new tenant, Belmont Optique, to City Hall, "where (Permit Center Coordinator) Mark Nolfi had already coordinated things with the planning department to make sure the tenant's new business was a permitted use. After reviewing the

Construction foreman Justin Hawxhurst, right, discusses plans with Marc Soper

changes and issued the building permit. Everyone was satisfied the process went smoothly."

Belmont Optique plans to open for business in September in a storefront previously occupied by a

tenant's plans, Mr. Nolfi requested some minor

Belmont Optique plans to open for business in September in a storefront previously occupied by a camera shop.

At the new Permit Center on the third floor of City Hall, representatives from the departments that issue permits are together so that an applicant can take care of his/her requests all at one location. An applicant has comprehensive access to building, zoning, public works, fire and business license services. The center also establishes a single point for payment of development review and building permits.

'Green Task Force' To Advise City on Funding Options to Purchase Open Space, Improve Parks

A "Green Task Force" is being assembled to advise the City Council on funding options for a potential ballot measure to purchase open space and improve the community athletic fields.

The 15-member task force will:

- Establish a total dollar amount for the proposal for open space acquisition, athletic field improvements, and on-going maintenance.
- Establish criteria for the prioritization of acquisition of open space.
- Establish a priority list of athletic field improvements.
- Recommend type of funding source.
- Conduct a citizen survey.

The task force will be comprised of individuals representing youth sports leagues, open space preservation interests, the Belmont/Redwood Shores School District, City commissions, and two at-large community members.

If you are interested in serving on the task force as an at-large community member please contact the City Clerk's Office at 650-595-7413 for an application. Completed applications are due by Sept. 13. The Council will conduct interviews for the at-large positions in October and make all of the appointments soon thereafter. The task force will take 6-12 months to complete its work.

Community Events Calendar

- Farmer's Market is held every Sunday through November 17, 9 a.m. 1 p.m., South Caltrain Parking Lot on El Camino Real.
- Wednesday, September 18, 11 a.m. at 2 p.m. San Mateo County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program will be conducting another **Thermometer Exchange.** Call 595-7427 for more information.
- September 21 and 22 **Art and Wine Festival** in Twin Pines Park; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m./Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Cottage luncheons Sept. 27 and Oct. 25 (12 1:30 p.m.) and are by reservation by calling 592-3366. Proceeds go to maintenance and restoration of the historic Cottage.
- October 21 Last day to **register to vote.**
- October 25 **Spookville** at Barrett Community Center, 5:00 7:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required, call 595-7441.
- November 9 **Parent's Night Ou**t at Barrett Community Center, 6:00 10:00 p.m. Preregistration is required, call 595-7441.
- November 5 **Special Election** to fill City Clerk position, polls open 7 a.m. 8 p.m.; call 595-7413 for more information.
- November 23 and 24 **Holiday Crafts Faire** at Twin Pines Community Senior Center; Saturday and Sunday10 4 p.m.
- November 25 **Carlmont Shopping Center Tree Lighting Ceremony** this event begins at approximately 5 p.m.
- December 7 **Breakfast with Santa** Twin Pines Senior Community Center, 10 a.m. Preregistration is required, call 595-7441.
- Belmont Park and Recreation Winter Camp Session I December 23, 24, 26 & 27; Session II, December 30, 31 January 2, 3 call 595-7441 for more information.

Belm	ont C	ity Ne	wsGram	1
Tell	Us W	hat Yo	ou Think	

Your comments can help us at City Hall serve you better! Have a question? A suggestion? A concern? A "way-to-go" for an exceptional job by a City employee? Tell us -- and if you want a reply, we'll send you one promptly. (*Note, for traffic concerns, please call the Traffic Safety Committee at 595-7463*). Send, email, or fax your other comments to: City Manager's Office, City of Belmont, 1070 Sixth Ave., Belmont, CA 94002. Fax: 637-2982, Email: cmanager@ci.belmont.ca.us

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How To Reach Your Local Officials

City Council	595-7413
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Business Licenses	
Human Resourcess	
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Comm. Learning Ctr. & Day Care	
Facility Rentals	
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Zoning Enforcement	
Building Inspections	
Sewers & Traffic	
Other Local Agencies	
South County Fire Authority	802-4255
Belmont Library	
Belmont School District	
Mid-Peninsula Water District	591-8941